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Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-09 NEA-10 ISO-00
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CIAE-00 EPG-02 COME-00 DLOS-09 DODE-00 DOTE-00
EB-07 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FEAE-00 FMC-02 TRSE-00 H-02
INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-02
OES-07 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 OIC-02 /186 W
----------251837Z 042016 /44
R 251708Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4341
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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PASS TO SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ADAMS AND COAST GUARD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EWWT, PORG, IMCO
SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE ON MARINE OIL
POLLUTION

REF: LONDON 8541

1. SUMMARY: US SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS PRESENTED TO IMCO COUNCIL ON MAY 23 US PROPOSALS FOR TANKER SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT. HIS REMARKS WERE FAVORABLY RECEIVED BY OTHER IMCO COUNCIL MEMBERS. PRESS CONFERENCE AT EMBASSY FOLLOWING STATEMENT RESULTED IN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE IN LONDON PRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS DELIVERED STATEMENT TO THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF IMCO COUNCIL EARLY IN ITS FIRST MEETING ON MAY 23. SUBJECT WAS UNITED STATES INITIATIVES ON OIL TANKERS AND MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ANNOUNCED IN PRESIDENT'S MARCH 17 MESSAGE TO CONGRESS. ADAMS GAVE BRIEF
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ACCOUNT OF BACKGROUND (INCLUDING CASE OF ARGO MERCHANT AND SERIES OF TANKER ACCIDENTS WHICH FOLLOWED) AND SUMMARIZED ACTIONS BEING TAKEN NATIONALLY AND PROPOSED INTERNATIONALLY BY USG. HE IDENTIFIED THREE DISTINCT ASPECTS OF TANKER PROBLEM REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS:
1) CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT,
2) INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION, AND
3) CREW TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION, AND REFERRED TO SPECIFIC US PROPOSALS FOR EACH ASPECT. HE EMPHASIZED US WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES GIVING SAME DEGREE OF PROTECTION AS US PROPOSALS. /HE EXPLAINED MEANING OF COAST GUARD NOTICES OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING PUBLISHED MAY 16 AND DESCRIBED TANKER SAFETY BILL 5,682 NOW BEFORE SENATE AS BEING GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH INITIATIVES ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT IN MARCH 17 MESSAGE. HE STRESSED US DESIRE TO ACHIEVE INTERNATIONAL ACCORD ON AN EFFECTIVE COURSE OF ACTION. HE URGED

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COUNCIL APPROVAL OF WORK PROGRAM AND CONFERENCE SCHEDULE RECOMMENDED BY MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE AT ITS APRIL SESSION, AND HE COMMENDED INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP WHICH MET WEEK OF MAY 16 FOR MAKING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING IMPROVED TANKER CERTIFICATION AND INSPECTION STANDARDS, REMARKING THAT SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND SENSE OF URGENCY IN WORKING GROUP CONFIRMED US VIEW THAT SUCCESSFUL RESULTS CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL PROCESS.

3. COPIES OF STATEMENT IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH WERE DISTRIBUTED TO COUNCIL ATTENDEES AND WILL BE TRANSMITTED TO ALL IMCO MEMBERS THROUGH USUAL IMCO CHANNELS.

4. SEVERAL DELEGATIONS RESPONDED TO ADAMS' STATEMENT, EMPHASIZING SUPPORT TO US EFFORTS TO REACH
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INTERNATIONAL ACCORD BUT NOT/EXPRESSING POSITIONS ON SPECIFIC US PROPOSALS. FOR UK, PARLIAMENTARY

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OES-07 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 251708Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4342
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
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UNDERSECRETARY DAVIS CITED WORK PROGRAM AND CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AS A "CHALLENGE IMCO SHOULD EMBRACE" AND HOPED OTHER DELEGATIONS WOULD SUPPORT THE "TIGHT BUT OBTAINABLE" TIMETABLE. HE PRAISED FLEXIBILITY INHERENT IN US WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES AND EQUIVALENTS TO US PROPOSALS. DAVIS DESCRIBED THE UK PROPOSAL, INTRODUCED AT APRIL MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE, TO ESTABLISH MARINE SAFETY CORPS UNDER IMCO AUSPICES TO AID THOSE GOVERNMENTS NEEDING HELP TO TIGHTEN AND IMPROVE THEIR INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. HE CALLED THIS PROPOSAL COMPLEMENTARY TO THE US PROPOSALS. HE STRESSED NEED TO BRING 1973

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MARINE POLLUTION AND 1974 SOLAS CONVENTIONS INTO FORCE.
HE CLOSED BY STATING HOPE THAT ALL WOULD RESPOND TO
US PROPOSALS IN A POSITIVE MANNER AND THAT NO ACTIONS
WOULD BE TAKEN TO DETRACT FROM AUTHORITY OF IMCO.
FOR FRANCE, SECRETARY GENERAL OF MERCHANT MARINE CHAPON
SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD SUPPORT THE PROPOSED SCHEDULE
BUT WISHED TO EMPHAZIZE MEASURES TO PREVENT HUMAN
ERROR. HE STRESSED OBJECTIONS TO UNILATERAL ACTIONS,
SAYING THAT THEY CAN PROLIFERATE TO POINT WHERE
"PROTECTION WILL BECOME PROTECTIONISM." FOLLOWING
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DELEGATIONS ALSO SPOKE IN TERMS FAVORABLE TO US
BUT EACH REGISTERED OPPOSITION TO UNILATERAL ACTION:
ITALY, GREECE, NORWAY, NIGERIA, BRAZIL, INDIA, USSR,
AND POLAND. USSR EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT TIMETABLE,
NOTING THAT 1973 CONFERENCE WAS PRECEDED BY SEVERAL
YEARS OF PREPARATORY WORK, AND SAYING THAT PRACTICABIL-
ITY OF FEBRUARY CONFERENCE COULD ONLY BE ASSESSED
AFTER JOINT MSC-MEPC SESSION IN OCTOBER.

5. CORRIDOR DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS ON
MONDAY AND TUESDAY DISCLOSED KEEN APPRECIATION OF
SECRETARY ADAMS' APPEARANCE AT COUNCIL. OVERALL
IMPACT WAS CLEARLY SIGNIFICANT, GIVING IMPETUS TO
COLLECTIVE EFFORTS IN IMCO TO ACHIEVE SPEEDY AND
MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE RESULTS. DELEGATES UNDERSTAND
SERIOUSNESS OF US CONCERNS AND SEEM WILLING TO
REACT ACCORDINGLY.

6. THOUGH TIME AT COUNCIL WAS VERY LIMITED,
SECRETARY DID MEET A NUMBER OF DELEGATES AND
COMMUNICATED TO INDIVIDUALS US HOPE FOR FRUITFUL
BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS INTERSESSIONALLY. IMCO
SECRETARY GENERAL SRIVASTAVA WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED
BY SECRETARY'S VISIT AND BELIEVES RESULTS WERE
VERY FAVORABLE.

7. FOLLOWING COUNCIL APPEARANCE SECRETARY ADAMS
HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AT EMBASSY, REPORTED REFTEL.
OPENING STATEMENT DEALT EXCLUSIVELY WITH IMCO VISIT
AND US INITIATIVES ON TANKERS BUT QUESTION PERIOD WAS
DOMINATED TO LARGE DEGREE BY AVIATION MATTERS. SOME
QUESTIONS ON TANKERS WERE ASKED, HOWEVER, AND ADAMS
WAS ABLE TO UNDERSCORE MAIN POINTS MADE IN STATEMENT
TO COUNCIL. COPIES OF STATEMENT WERE MADE AVAILABLE
AND OVER 40 COPIES WERE TAKEN BY PRESS.

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8. SUBSEQUENT PRESS COVERAGE OF ADAMS' STATEMENTS ON TANKERS WAS GENERALLY FAVORABLE AND REASONABLY ACCURATE. SOME PAPERS GAVE PREEMINENCE TO DAVIS'

FOR MARINE SAFETY CORPS. REFERENCES TO ALLEGED US

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TENDENCIES TOWARD UNILATERALISM WERE MODERATE IN TONE, USUALLY IN CONTEXT THAT US UNILATERAL ACTION WAS LIKELY ONLY IF INTERNATIONAL ACTION WAS EXCESSIVELY DELAYED OR PROCESS PRODUCED RESULTS UNACCEPTABLE TO US. IDEA THAT US WOULD NOT WAIT FOR IMCO TO ACT, EXPRESSED IN PRESS REPORTS IN PREVIOUS WEEKS. WAS NOT REFLECTED IN REPORTS OF ADAMS' VISIT.

9. COMMENT. APPEARANCE BY SECRETARY ADAMS AT IMCO WITH STATEMENT TO COUNCIL, FOLLOWED BY PRESS COVERAGE OF VISIT AND STATEMENTS, WAS EMINENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN UNDERSCORING SERIOUSNESS OF US CONCERNS REGARDING OIL TANKERS AND PREFERENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLUTIONS TO TANKER RELATED PROBLEMS. EFFECTS OF VISIT ARE EXPECTED TO YIELD LONG TERM BENEFITS IN NEGOTIATING RELATIONSHIPS. PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH HIGH RANKING INDIVIDUALS IN UK SHIPPING INDUSTRY DISCLOSE THAT OUR MESSAGE HAS GOTTEN THROUGH AND THAT INDUSTRY IS BOTH UNDERSTANDING OF US ATTITUDES AND WILLING TO COOPERATE TO DEGREE WELL BEYOND THAT EXPRESSED FORMERLY. THOSE VIEWS, COUPLED WITH EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT AND COOPERATION FROM DELEGATES, UNCLASSIFIED

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PERMIT US DELEGATION TO ADOPT ATTITUDE OF CAUTIOUS
BUT WELCOME OPTIMISM TOWARD ACHIEVEMENT OF US
OBJECTIVES AT COUNCIL AND TECHNICAL MEETINGS SCHEDULED
FOR JUNE AND JULY.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2379490
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE ON MARINE OIL POLLUTION
TAGS: EWWT, PORG, IMCO, (ADAMS, BROCK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/856b498a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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